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Comment on CINCPAC Assessment of Effects of Commention of Bombing Attack Against NVM

1. This paper evaluates a CINCPAC assessment of the effects of a constion of booking against North Vistams.

#### General Courant

- 2. The CIMCPAC assessment over-cimplifies and overstates the effects of a helt in the bombing. In addition, several of its factual statements are in error. The CIMCPAC evaluation of the political and payebological effects is an inedequate treatment of a highly complex issue. CIMCPAC also presents an exaggrated picture of the case with which Hanoi could take adventage of a casestion in the bombing to restore or to improve its military and economic capabilities to carry on the war in the South.
- 3. The report treats inedequately or not at all such partiaent factors as the manner in which the essention of booking is presented and corried out; the extent to which NVN reactions will be determined by Remot's judgment of the probable duration of a booking halt; and the correlities of allied ground forces to restrict or to disrupt possible Communist military moves in the South.

#### Decille Comments

## Reconcide Rifects

- 4. CIMPAC's assumption that a rebuilding of the economy would be initiated immediately upon a commation of the bombing is unrealistic. Heaved would probably choose to step up the reconstruction of LOC's and industrial facilities that could be required quickly and contribute most to the wor effort. We regard it unlikely that extensive reconstruction of all modern industry would be undertaken unless Hanoi was at least certain that the bombing constitution was permanent and had some reasonable expectation that a permanent settlement of the war was imment.
- 5. The assessment of recovery in the modern industrial sector understates the time that will be required to fully restore industry to pre-strike levels of operation. Recovery will be beavily dependent on foreign aid. Although specific major facilities, such as power plants or the Haiphong cement plant, could probably be restored to partial operation within relatively short periods of time, an across-the-board restoration of industry would require, conservatively, at least two years to organize and to carry out.
- 6. An estimated 50 percent of designed electric generating capacity could be restored to service within 6 months, but complete restoration will take about 2 years. It will take at least one year for recovery in the textile industry, involving either relocation of

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dispersed textile machinery or installation of new machinery, and rejor reconstruction of the largest plant. More than one year vill be required to rebuild the Haiphong coment plant. Book decays to other industry probably could be repaired in 3 to 6 months.

- 7. The restoration of bulk PCL storage capacity would have a relatively low priority since the present system is adequate, and bulk storage would be extremely vulnerable in the event that six attacks were renewed.
- 8. We estimate that the major interdicted LCC's would be quickly repaired but do not agree with CINCPAC's estimate that they could be restored to full use in a matter of weeks. The initial through servicesbility of any LCC, after the bombing stoyped, would still require use of temperary bridges or other lower capacity alternate crossings. A new permanent bridge would generally require 3 to 6 months for construction. Permanent repair of cll major bridges would require much longer. The Vinh line, for example, could not be operated at full pre-strike capacity until the load factor on all bridges was raised to their original especity.
- 9. CINCPAC overetates the extent to which Haiphong has been isolated. Traffic moving cut of Haiphong has been slowed down and a greater effort is required to move it; but there is no indication that the accumulation of goods at Haiphong has increased since the land routes to the interior have been attacked.
- 10. The CDKPAC essessment of the effects in transportation contains several errors. The estimate of the especity of the Hanoi-Vinh line should be 1,800 rather than 200 short tens per day. This line, moreover, has never been completely inoperable since the boshing began. We estimate that during the past Tet boshing pause North Vietness moved about 15,000-20,000 tons rather than 25,000 tons, south of the 18th parallel.
- 11. CHRTAC's statement that a wealth of manpower would be evaluable for redirection in the war effort is a gross exaggeration. The number of North Vietnemene diverted to full-time and part-time war related activities caused by the bookings is only about 600,000. About half of the total are women and some are men too old to serve in the military. About 110,000 of the total are already in the military. Thus, the number of men that might be freed for military duty in Leos or fouth Vietnem by a constion of bombing would repeat to be such lower than implied.
- 12. The reduced rice harvests in 1966 and 1967 were probably due more to adverse weather than to war-related factors, olthough management diversions and transportation difficulties undoubtedly

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contributed. Weather is such a controlling factor in North Vietnam's agricultural output that it is not certain whether a successful hervest would follow a cessation of bosbing. Nor is it certain that food imports would distinish. North Vietnam, normally a food deficit country, imported over 160,000 tons in 1964. Food imports in 1967 will amount to about 400,000 tons, two and a half times the pre-bosbing level. Despite the bosbing, food imports in 1966 were low -- 77,000 tons -- and a comparison of 1967 imports with those of 1966, is misleading.

### Militery Effects

13. CINCPAC states correctly that the NVE could increase sigmificantly the flow of expelies to the South and improve its capabilities
for military operations from areas morth of the DML and in South
Vistoms. It cannot be demonstrated, however, that the present air
war has put a relevant cop on the forces that the communists can
expect in the South or on the enemy's ability to build up stockpiles
in the fouth or in Laos. A cosmics of the boubing would not
alleviate one of the sujor and growing problems in the South — the
internal transport and resupply of combat units in the South in
face of intensified allies ground operation.

14. Remoi's attainment of a military advantage in the South is determined essentially by the capability of allied forces to contain Communist ectivities. A bombing balt, in itself, cannot give Hanoi such an advantage. CINCPAC's assessment of possible military actions by the North Vietnamese also fails to admindedge that the possibility of a renewal of the bombing could put a secentrical damper on the extent to which Hanoi would seek to escalate the var in the South, or to increase its use of the erea North of the DMZ for artillery or air operations.

15. Finally, we would note that stockylling of military supplies "just north of the DEE" would not greatly expand the revenent through Land, except over the trails that extend around and through the DEE into Land. Route 137 enters Land about 35 miles north of the DEE.

# Political and Psychological Effects

16. A bombing cossistion might raise false hopes in the world of an early settlement of the conflict, but this would depend entirely on how the US pressed its case. Honoi certainly would evade any settlement, except on its con terms. North Vietnem has insisted all along, as one of its Four Points, that foreign troops must leave Vietnem. It would continue to do so after a bombing helt. There is no reason to examp, as CINCPAC does, that Hanoi's demands would find a more sympathetic sudience after a bombing helt. On the

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contrary, there sincet cartainly would be considerable pressure put on North Vietness to modify its own intrensigent torus for a settlement.

- 17. We agree that Hanol would interpret a cossation as a weakening of US resolve and a tacit acknowledgment that the bombing was not accomplishing its objectives. Hence would continue fighting in the south, but it would not entertain any logs of defeating the US culitary, having abendoned this tope long ago. It would continue to try to wear down the US through a whole series of bettles, but it would be most unlikely to pin all its hopes on any single, decisive bestle.
- 13. We do not dispute the essential conclusion that in the absence of US political concessions, a bushing halt would not cause lissoi either to stop its activities in the South or to enter serious negotiations.
- 19. Henol's reaction to a bombing consection must be vioued, however, in the light of its princry objective of bringing all fouth Victors under Cosmulat control. Honoi realizes that its only hope for a fevorable solution lies in a modification of US objectives in the South. A cossistion of bombing, would be seen as a significant step in the right direction, but North Vietnas would be very of relying on such a judgment until they but further tosted US intentions in the South. If Borth Victoria concluded that the US was not propared to rake further concessions, it probably would resist involvecent in any scrious negotiations and propore to continue the struggle whether the bombing remmed or not. Menoi doubtless would seek to resistein the advantages of a bombing consuction, prehaps even by engaging in come from of talks in the hope that international and committe pressure on the US would inhibit a decision to start the boshings again. Borth Vietness would continue to ecosider the boshings on indecisive element in the war, however, and would not comprovise my essential element in its position just to maintain the consation.

CIA/CER 21 Bovember 1967

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